

[Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rate in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

[Red flags hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (February 18) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

[Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practice at ginseng and dried seafood shop](#)

Hong Kong Customs today (February 17) arrested a salesman of a ginseng and dried seafood shop suspected to have applied a false trade description in the sale of dried fish maw, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs officers conducted a test-buy operation at a ginseng and dried

seafood shop in Tsim Sha Tsui today. A salesman was suspected to have claimed that the unit price of dried fish maw was calculated per catty. After the dried fish maw was sliced, the salesman revealed that the goods were priced per tael. The charged amount was 16 times different from expected. Customs officers then arrested the 48-year-old man.

Investigation is ongoing and the arrested man has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TD0 and consumers to procure products at reputable shops.

Under the TD0, any person who in the course of any trade or business applies a false trade description to any goods commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TD0 to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

Suspected MERS cases reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (February 17) reported two suspected cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit. The cases are detailed below:

Sex	Male	Male
Age	4	44
Affected area involved	Jordan; and Dubai, United Arab Emirates	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Camel ride	Nil
Hospital	Princess Margaret Hospital	Queen Mary Hospital
Condition	Stable	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Negative	Pending

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed relevant symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the World Health Organization's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

[Two kinds of prepackaged cereal products may contain allergens \(gluten and wheat\)](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (February 17) said that two kinds of prepackaged cereal products manufactured in the United States (US) might contain allergens, gluten and wheat, but they were not declared on the products' food labels. Consumers who are allergic to gluten or wheat are advised not to eat the products concerned. The trade should also stop using or selling the products concerned immediately.

Product details are as follows:

(1) Product name: Choco Chimps
Brand: Nature's Path EnviroKidz
Place of origin: USA
Distributor: Rainbow Asset Ltd
Net weight: 10 ounces (284 grams) per box
Best before date: August 27, 2019

(2) Product name: Gorilla Munch
Brand: Nature's Path EnviroKidz
Place of origin: USA
Distributor: Rainbow Asset Ltd
Net weight: 10 ounces (284 grams) per box
Best before date: September 21, 2019

"The CFS, through its Food Incident Surveillance System, noted notices issued by the US and Canadian authorities concerned that several kinds of cereal products of the above-mentioned brands are under recall because they may contain gluten and wheat but undeclared on the food labels," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately followed up with major local importers and retailers. Preliminary investigation found that a local retailer, PARKnSHOP (HK) Limited, had sold the above batches of the affected products. The retailer has already stopped sale and removed from shelves the affected batches of products and initiated a recall according to CFS' instructions. Members of the public may call its hotline at 2606 8658 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

"Gluten and wheat are known food allergens. Those who are allergic to gluten or wheat may develop symptoms like vomiting, diarrhoea, asthma and rash upon consumption. In severe cases anaphylactic shock may even develop," the spokesman said.

The spokesman advised consumers who are allergic to gluten or wheat not to eat the products, and to seek medical treatment if they feel unwell after taking the food. The trade should also stop using or selling the above batches of the affected products immediately should they possess it.

The Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W) require that all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong should list out the food ingredients in its list of ingredients. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The CFS will alert the trade, continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action. Investigation is on-going.